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EXPEDITION TO PAPAGUERIA AND SERILAND**A Preliminary Note**

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In the autumn of 1894 the Bureau of American Ethnology, with the specific approbation of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, conducted an expedition (in charge of the writer) through the territory of the Papago Indians for the purpose of making collections representing the arts and industries of this tribe for the enrichment of the National Museum. A considerable collection was made and partially installed in the Museum, and a portion of it was exhibited at the International and Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta during the autumn of 1895. In addition to the objective material, this expedition yielded important data relating to the physical characteristics, habits, and customs of the Papago Indians, including several hundred photographs (made by Mr William Dinwiddie). While in the neighborhood of Sonora river advantage was taken of the opportunity to visit the territory of the Seri Indians, and the party were so fortunate as to find nearly a quarter of the tribe in a temporary rancheria on their borderland, near Rancho de San Francisco de Costa Rica, and a number of photographs, with objects illustrating their arts, a vocabulary, and other data were obtained. Since little was previously known concerning either the Papago or the Seri Indians, the results of the expedition were of special value;* but in both cases the material was incomplete and whetted the desire for more, and this desire led to the organization of another expedition last autumn. The chief desiderata in the latter expedition were (1) collections representing the maritime habits of the Seri, and (2) further information concerning the social organization of the Papago.

The party outfitted in Tucson and, leaving that point November 9, 1895, traversed Papagueria, visiting various villages and examining prehistoric works in Arizona and Sonora, reaching the Seri borders about the end of the month, a planetable route survey being carried forward by Mr Willard D. Johnson, while

*Some of the incidental results of the expedition of 1894 are summarized in "The Beginning of Agriculture," *American Anthropologist*, volume VIII, page 350.

a number of prehistoric works were mapped in detail. Early in December a small boat was built at Rancho de San Francisco de Costa Rica, and after a preliminary exploration of the Sonoran portion of Seriland, this vessel (the *Anita*) was transported to the coast of Kino bay, a part of the gulf of California. On entering Seriland, as the territory was spontaneously designated by different members of the expedition, the party was increased to twelve (four Americans, viz., W J McGee, Willard D. Johnson, and John W. Mitchell, of Washington, with S. C. Millard, of Los Angeles; two Mexicans, viz., Sr Andres Noriega, of Costa Rica, and Sr Ygnacio Castillo, of Hermosillo; five Papago Indians, viz., Mariana, Anton, Miguel, Anton Castillo, and Anton Ortiz, of Costa Rica; and one Yaki Indian, Ruperto Alvarez), and every provision was made for the safety of life and property, since it was ascertained that the tribe, always bloodthirsty and treacherous, had been rendered exceptionally hostile by recent conflicts with Mexican officials and vaqueros. The work of the expedition was greatly facilitated by the hearty coöperation of Sr Pascual Encinas, of Hermosillo, owner of the rancho on which the boat was built and which served as headquarters throughout the work in Seriland.

The *Anita* was launched December 15, and, after visiting Alcatraz island (on which the Seri obtain pelicans in large numbers), the party coasted to the turbulent strait aptly named El Infiernillo, and on December 19 crossed to Tiburon island, where ten days were spent in explorations and surveys, in unsuccessful efforts to open communication with the Indians (who fled at the approach of the party), and in examining their newly abandoned haunts and habitations. Returning, the party reached Señor Encinas' rancho December 31, when the leader repaired to Washington, leaving a small party under Mr Johnson to retrace the country of the Papago and map the route of last year's expedition.

Papagueria has already been described as a semi-desert, lying south of Gila river and west of the Sierra Madre, in which the flora, the fauna, and the human inhabitants display characteristics of especial significance, since the rigorous environment has forced the organisms into a coöperation by which both individuality and solidarity are developed in exceptional degree. Many new observations bearing on this subject were made, and a collection of plants and animals was gathered. The social organiza-

tion of the Papago Indians was studied in the hope of ascertaining the influence of a peculiar environment on human institutions, and some useful results were obtained. The prehistoric works of Papagueria were found to be remarkable in extent as well as in number, one mountain three-quarters of a mile long and over 600 feet high being terraced from base to summit. The rock structure and geologic development of the region were carefully studied and found to be of great interest, and the planetable surveys will yield the first trustworthy map of the region.

The most interesting results of the expedition relate to the Seri Indians and their territory. Seriland is an ethnic and archeologic unit. It comprises Tiburon (about 500 square miles), Alcatraz (less than one square mile), and several smaller islands situated about midlength of the gulf of California, together with a more extensive area (some 2,500 square miles) of the adjacent mainland in the state of Sonora. The entire tract is mountainous. Tiburon island embraces half a dozen ranges with peaks of 3,000 to 4,000 feet; most of Alcatraz island is a rocky butte rising over 500 feet above the waters at its base, and the culminating peak of the mainland ranges is about 5,000 feet in altitude. The province is extremely arid. There are four permanent water holes on the mainland section, in two of which the water is quite and in a third somewhat brackish; Alcatraz is without fresh water; on Tiburon there is one small stream too feeble to reach the coast, besides a few small tinajas and springs, of which only one was found. Despite the dearth of fresh water, there is a meager flora of the ordinary subdesert character and a fairly rich fauna, while the gulf waters abound in marine life. The province is barred from the body of Sonora by a zone of saline flats (or playas) and sand dunes apparently homologous with the Mojave desert of California, the lower portions of which apparently lie below sea-level, this desert forming a much more effective boundary than the narrow strait separating Tiburon island from the mainland. Papagueria, with its entrenched mountains and ruined villages, ends on the hither border of the desert zone, while Caucasian culture, which has extended into almost every nook and corner of northern Mexico, ends with the settlements and outlying ranchos on Sonora and Bacuachi rivers, from 10 to 20 miles from the barrier desert. Within Seriland there are no people but the Seri, no ancient works save shell mounds and stone heaps such as the Seri now accumulate, no trace of culture except the essen-

tially indigenous culture of the Seri tribe. From the historical records of over three centuries it is known that the Seri have claimed and successfully defended this territory against all comers, and that although they have sometimes pushed beyond their natural boundary in predatory raids or for more persistent occupancy their hold on contiguous territory has never been firm or long maintained. Yet their occupancy of their own naturally protected land has been very long; some of their shell mounds are of great magnitude and have outlasted considerable geographic changes.

The Seri Indians are of fine physique—tall, broad-chested, and full-loined, with slender arms and legs, though the hands and especially the feet are large; their skin is notably dark, and their hair, which it worn long, is luxuriant and black or tawny. The men, and in only less degree the women, are noted for strength, celerity, and endurance—indeed, it is commonly through the possession of these qualities, rather than the aid of mental operations, that they capture game. They speak a language of limited vocabulary, supposed by some to be related to the Yuman, though the material collected during the earlier expedition indicates that it is distinct. Their habitations are rude temporary structures of bushes and turtle shells, designed for protection only against sun and wind; their ordinary clothing is a short skirt of pelican skin, dressed with feathers on, fastened about the waist with a neatly twisted cord of their own hair or of mesquite-root fiber, and for further protection against inclement weather and for bedding they use robes each made of four, six, or eight pelican skins sewed together with sinew. Their chief weapons are the bow and arrow, with clubs and stones, while their hereditary enemies dread their teeth and nails no less than their artificial weapons. They claim to poison their arrows, and this claim is supported by a considerable body of evidence. During recent years they have acquired a few guns by capture and theft. Their arrows were originally tipped with charred hard wood and later with chipped stone, though during recent years they have obtained a little sheet iron and other light metal which they use for this purpose and for knives, the primitive knife being a bit of cane or a sharp-edge shell. They manufacture a distinctive pottery, notable for lightness and fragility, in a few simple forms, make flat baskets somewhat similar to those of neighboring tribes, and navigate their strait and adjacent waters by means of well-

made and graceful balsas or reed canoes. Commonly they subsist on turtles, taken chiefly at night by spearing; pelicans and other water fowl, taken at night with clubs; and crabs, oysters, and clams, which are found abundantly along the shores, with a variety of other sea food. Occasionally they consume the flesh of the deer, turkey, bighorn, peccary, rabbit, land turtle, and other animals and birds found both on the mainland and the island, together with fruits of cacti, berries, mesquite beans, etc., in season. Most of their food is eaten raw, and much of it as carrion, and they neither plant nor cultivate in the slightest degree. They have no domestic animals, except dogs of a mongrel breed, apparently of coyote blood in large part. With the exception of the arrowpoint (which, like the pottery and perhaps the basketry, seems to have been acquired by imitation, and the designation of which is known only to a few of the tribe), their stone art is primitive and represents the stage of discovery and adaptation rather than the more advanced stage of invention and designed manufacture. Stones are picked up at random for various uses, and if they prove suitable are sometimes kept until worn and polished by use, though they are much more frequently thrown away or abandoned—*i. e.*, they are in a *protolithic* stage rather than in the neolithic or even the paleolithic stage, in both of which design and purposive manufacture play essential rôles. They appear to have a crude mythology in which the ancient pelican—a magical bird of melodious song—is assigned the leading place, Alcatraz (pelican) island being the first-formed land; and fetishes are in constant use. They are not known to have other ceremonials than mourning for the dead and the puberty feast for girls. The bodies of the dead are dressed and adorned, flexed into small compass, laid on the left side in shallow graves, provided with food and water as well as fetishes and favorite articles, and buried under earth or stones.

The social organization of the Seri appears to be indefinite, perhaps in consequence of long-continued warfare and diminution in numbers; the chieftainship is secured by individual prowess or shrewdness and tribal consent, and the tenure depends on continued success or popular whim. Originally the people appear to have been monogamous and some of them profess that condition at present, though actually polygyny prevails, the women much outnumbering the men. They are strictly, indeed fiercely, endogamous, alien connection being the blackest

crime in their calendar and invariably punished by death ; and they describe a singular marriage custom which at once tends toward strengthening their endogamy and indicates long isolation. They are treacherous and savage in war, which they conduct by ambush or raid, being cowardly in open battle ; they appear to thirst for alien blood and, as they profess and their conduct proclaims, never fail to kill people of other kin save when deterred by fear. So firmly implanted is the martial habit that, like feral carnivores, they avoid watering places ; even a temporary camp is located a mile or two from the tinaja, while the permanent rancherias are usually five or ten miles from the nearest permanent supply of fresh water. A rancheria may contain from one to a dozen or even a score of separate habitations, each accommodating a family, and the places of abode are not permanent, but changed from day to day as the condition of food supply or caprice suggests. From historical records it is known that the Seri have been engaged in practically continuous warfare against all other peoples for two or three centuries, and their archeology and some of their characteristics and customs indicate that they have been inimical to neighboring tribes for many centuries. By their Mexican and Indian neighbors they are commonly believed to be anthropophagous, but this they consistently deny. The earliest estimates place their number at 2,000, but their population has been progressively reduced by warfare until now they number only about 350, including some 50 or 60 warriors and twice as many adult women, the remainder being children.

Considerable collections were made in Seriland, articles designed for barter being left in exchange ; the gem of the collection is a fine balsa. As is usual in exploration, especially in the territory of warlike tribes, the work of the expedition was attended with some risk and hardship. For example, every drop of water consumed on the island was carried from 5 to 15 miles, over bad ground, by heavily armed men, in squads of five or more ; and by reason of persistent gales the party were so delayed that food supplies were practically exhausted, even though eked out by crabs, oysters, shark-meat, etc. On several occasions, too, the value of the bisnaga (*Echinocactus*) as a source of water was tested, and much suffering was prevented by its use.

January 25, 1896.